

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

All specification amendments are to the **Summary of the Invention** of the above application as-filed, and are made to summarize claims 1 and 4-10. These are the claims which were added or amended substantially subsequent to filing, and include the claims which were amended in the **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT** included with the **NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE** dated 01/13/2006.

First, following page 2, line 24, the last line of the last full paragraph of page 2 of the application, please insert the following six new paragraphs which summarize the subject matter, respectively, of claims 1, 7/1, 8//7, 9/8, 10/8 and 4.:

In another aspect, the present invention is embodied in a pipe assembly, comprising: first and second corrugated metal pipes having respective first and second longitudinal axes and respective first and second ends; a first plastic cuff formed along the periphery of the first pipe end and embedding the first pipe end therein and a mating second plastic cuff formed along the periphery of the second pipe end and embedding the second pipe end therein. Each of the first and second cuffs comprises a shoulder formed around the periphery of the associated first and second pipes; the first plastic cuff comprises a tongue, the second plastic cuff comprises a groove, and the first and second cuffs form a mating tongue and groove joint peripherally spanning the first and second pipe ends. Fastening means span the first and second shoulders and abut the first and second shoulders, for drawing the first and second pipe ends together axially

and thereby sealing the first and second pipe ends along the tongue and groove joint.

In yet another aspect, the fastening means comprises first and second hoops and a plurality of bolts. The first and second hoops are mounted around the first and second pipe ends, respectively, and abut the first and second shoulders, respectively. Each hoop comprises a plurality of holes or loops spaced apart around the hoop at intervals selected for aligning the holes of the first and second hoops by rotating the hoops about the longitudinal axes of the first and second pipes. The plurality of bolts extend between the hoops and through the aligned holes thereof for clamping the hoops against the shoulders, thereby drawing the first and second pipe ends together axially and sealing the first and second pipe ends along the tongue and groove joint.

In still another aspect, the first hoop further comprises a first gap; a first end of the first hoop being on one side of the first gap; a second end of the first hoop being on the opposite side of the first gap; and first means joining the first and second ends of the first hoop at the first gap; and the second hoop further comprises a second gap; a first end of the second hoop being on one side of the second gap; a second end of the second hoop being on the opposite side of the second gap; and second means joining the first and second ends of the second hoop at the second gap.

In a first alternative embodiment of the first and second means of the respective first and second hoops, the first means comprises a first weld; and the second means comprises a second weld.

In a second alternative embodiment of the first and second means of the respective first and second hoops, the first means comprises a first loop mounted on one side of the first gap; a second loop mounted on the opposite side of the first gap, with the first and second loops of the first hoop being oriented generally transverse to the plane of the first hoop; and a first bolt extending through the first and second loops for drawing together the first and second loops at the first gap and thereby tightening the first hoop against the associated pipe. The second means comprises a third loop mounted on one side of the second gap; a fourth loop mounted on the opposite side of the second gap; the third and fourth loops of the second hoop being oriented generally transverse to the plane of the second hoop; and a second bolt extending through the third and fourth loops for drawing together the third and fourth loops at the second gap and thereby tightening the second hoop against the associated pipe.

In yet another aspect, the present invention is embodied in a pipe assembly, comprising: first and second metal pipes having respective first and second ends; first and second plastic cuffs embedding the first and second pipe ends, respectively, each cuff forming a shoulder, the first and second cuffs having a tongue and groove, respectively, adapted for mating when the first cuff is inserted into the second cuff; first and second wire hoops mounted around the first and second pipe ends, respectively; and a plurality of fasteners extending between the hoops and clamping the hoops against the shoulders and the first and second pipe ends against the first and second cuffs.

Second, please replace the paragraph spanning page 2, line 25 through page 3, line 9 of the specification with the following replacement paragraph (this paragraph summarizes claim 5):

In a further aspect, the present invention is embodied in components suitable for forming a composite metal and plastic pipe assembly, comprising: first and second metal pipes having longitudinal axes and respective first and second ends; a first plastic cuff ~~formed around the periphery of~~ embedding the first pipe end and a second plastic cuff ~~formed around the periphery of~~ embedding the second pipe end, with the first and second cuffs having a tongue and a groove, respectively, adapted for mating when the first cuff is inserted into the second cuff. The components further include first and second wire hoops of size and configuration adapted for mounting over and engaging the first and second pipe ends, respectively; and a plurality of fasteners adapted for clamping the first and second hoops and the first and second pipe ends axially.

Third, please replace the paragraph spanning page 3, lines 10-19 of the as-filed specification (the last paragraph of the **Summary of the Invention**) with the following replacement paragraph (which paragraph summarizes claim 6):

In a further, method aspect, the present invention is embodied in a method for fastening and sealing first and second pipes at respective first and second ends thereof, comprising: ~~molding first and second mating, plastic cuffs around the periphery of the respective first and second pipe ends,~~ with embedding the first and second pipe ends in respective first and second plastic cuffs, the first and second cuffs having a tongue and groove, respectively, adapted for mating when the first cuff is inserted into the second cuff and each cuff having a shoulder; assembling a first hoop and a second hoop around the first pipe end and the second pipe end adjacent the shoulders thereof; and clamping the first and second hoops

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together generally axially along the first and second pipes, thereby clamping the hoops against the shoulders and the first and second pipe ends against the first and second cuffs.